

Message Text

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PASS: OES FOR HEMILY, NSF FOR G P JOHNSON

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TAGS: TGEN, OECD

SUBJECT: OECD/CST: ADVISORY GROUP ON SOCIAL ASSESSMENT
OF TECHNOLOGY: MEETING ON PROJECT 2, "HUMANIZED WORKING
CONDITIONS", MAY 20-21, 1975. SUMMARY REPORT.

1. MEETING WAS CHAIRED BY US (ZUCKER, NSF). OTHER
COUNTRIES REPRESENTED: AUSTRALIA, FINLAND, FRANCE,
GERMANY, NORWAY, SWEDEN, UK. US REPRESENTED BY GENE
ZUCKER, NSF AND JOHN OWEN, CONSULTANT TO NSF.

2. BACKGROUND PAPER PREPARED AND PRESENTED BY SWEDISH
CONSULTANT TO OECD, BO OSCARSSON, WAS FOLLOWED BY DIS-
CUSSION THAT RESOLVED ITSELF INTO FIRST APPROACH TO
EXPRESSIONS OF NATIONAL INTEREST IN BREAKDOWN COMPONENTS
OF OVERALL FIELD.

3. POSSIBLE STUDY AREAS LISTED WERE: (A) ROBOTIZATION
OF INDUSTRY, (B) COMPUTERIZATION OF OFFICE WORK, (C)
CONTROL ROOM SITUATION, (D) ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULES,
(E) SHIFT WORK SYSTEMS, (F) ASSEMBLY LINE CONDITIONS,
(G) OVERALL STUDIES OF SPECIFIC INDUSTRIAL BRANCHES
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(GRAPHICS, BUILDING, MECHANICAL ENGINEERING), (H) JOB

SATISFACTION, (I) STRESS BEHAVIOUR.

4. TO LIMIT SELECTION, INITIAL CRITERION WAS THAT STUDY AREA MUST HAVE MINIMUM OF FOUR COUNTRIES EITHER ALREADY INVOLVED IN PROJECTS OR INTERESTED IN THEIR INITIATION VIA OECD. ONLY TWO STUDY AREAS MET THIS CRITERION: (A) ROBOTIZATION OF INDUSTRY (FRANCE, GERMANY, SWEDEN, US INTERESTED: NO KNOWLEDGE OF CURRENT NATIONAL STUDIES IN THIS FIELD, (B) COMPUTERIZATION OF OFFICE WORK (FRANCE, NORWAY, SWEDEN, US WITH STUDIES ALREADY IN PROGRESS).

5. STUDY AREAS (A) AND (B) WILL THEREFORE BE PROPOSED TO THE ADVISORY GROUP, WHICH MEETS JUNE 2-3, CHAIRED BY INGLEDAM (SWEDEN). AT THAT TIME, THE FOUR COUNTRIES INVOLVED RESPECTIVELY IN THE TWO PROPOSED STUDY AREAS SHOULD BE IN A POSITION TO OFFER REASONABLY FIRM STATEMENTS ON COMMITMENT TO THE PROGRAM, WITH A CLEAR INDICATION OF INTER-AGENCY INTEREST.

6. USOECD NOTE THAT THE EXPERTS FROM AUSTRALIA, FINLAND, NORWAY AND THE UK, ALTHOUGH EXPRESSING HIGH INTEREST IN THE SUBJECT OF HUMANIZED WORKING CONDITIONS, ALL EXPRESSED DOUBTS ABOUT THE UTILITY OR EVEN APPLICABILITY OF THE TECHNOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT APPROACH IN THIS AREA. THESE FOUR COUNTRIES ARE NOT INTERESTED IN THE ROBOTIZATION OF INDUSTRY PROJECT, AND ONLY ONE (NORWAY) IN THE COMPUTERIZATION OF OFFICE WORK STUDY. THIS EXPLAINS THEIR OVERALL ATTITUDE TO SOME EXTENT, BUT THERE APPEARS TO BE IN ADDITION, AN EVIDENT RELUCTANCE TO CONSTRAIN ONGOING NATIONAL SOCIAL STUDIES TO WHAT THEY MAY REGARD AS THE ARTIFICIAL FRAMEWORK OF TECHNOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGIES. THAT CAREFUL PREPARATION IS REQUIRED WAS AGREED BY ALL, AND IN THE CASE OF STUDY (B), COMPUTERIZATION OF OFFICE WORK, AN INFORMAL INITIAL PROBE MAY BE NECESSARY TO DISCOVER WHETHER OR NOT NATIONAL AUTHORITIES RESPONSIBLE FOR ONGOING WORK ARE WILLING TO CONSIDER ADAPTING THEIR STUDIES TO OECD REQUIREMENTS. IN THE CASE OF STUDY (A), ROBOTIZATION OF INDUSTRY, A SIMILAR INITIAL PROBE MAY BE

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REQUIRED IF IT IS DISCOVERED THAT THERE ARE IN FACT ONGOING OR PROJECTED STUDIES IN THE PARTICIPATING MEMBER-COUNTRIES.
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